

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are withdrawn. As indicated by the Examiner on page 3 of the Office Action, Applicants may change the inventorship of this application if one of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application.

Claims 31-42 are pending in this application. Applicants have amended certain claims in this Response because Applicants believe these amendments serve a useful clarification purpose independent of patentability. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claim amendments do not limit the range of any permissible equivalents.

Claim 31 has been amended to clarify that the mold cavity may be formed or defined by a first and second mold plate, and that the first mold plate has a plurality of retractable pins. At least one of the retractable pins has two or more projections that, for instance, may be used to form two or more dimples on a golf ball cover layer formed around a core placed in the mold cavity. New independent claim 37 is similar to claim 31, except that it recites that a plurality of vent pins instead of a plurality of retractable pins.

These two embodiments of the invention are well described throughout the specification. As such, no new matter has been added by the amendments and introduction of new claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request entry of these amendments at this time.

The Examiner's Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 31 as indefinite for a lack of antecedent basis for the term "the pins". Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment to claim 31 resolves this rejection. The Examiner also rejected claim 31 on the ground that there must be a plurality of claims in order to center the core. This rejection is also moot in view of the present amendment. Applicants note, however, that a core may be centered within a cavity on one pin.

The Examiner's Rejections Under 35 USC § 102 and § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 31-36 as anticipated or obvious for the reasons set forth on pages 3-6 of the Office Action. In particular, the Examiner relied on Inoue '237 and Pumiello '881 to reject the claims. Applicants traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

The portion of Inoue '237 that the Examiner relies on is directed to the embodiment of Figure 6. This embodiment uses a single, oversized ejector pin that remains in conformance with the mold cavity profile during molding, but can be used to eject the molded ball after the mold is opened. There is no teaching or suggestion to use a plurality of pins as presently recited

in claims 31 and 37. Moreover, a plurality of smaller pins would likely be unsuitable as an ejector pin as described in Inoue '237. Typically, when a plurality of pins are used, their movement into or out of the mold cavity forms an angle with the curvature of pin opening in which the pins move. Thus, using a plurality of pins to impact the molded ball would impart non-axial forces on the pins that could easily cause the pins to be permanently bent out of position. Thus, a skilled artisan would not be independently motivated to modify the embodiment of Figure 6 of Inoue '237 to arrive at the presently claimed invention.

With respect to the Examiner's reliance on Puniello '881, Applicants respectfully submit that Figures 6-9c and the discussion at col. 7, lines 22-47 are directed toward a single sleeve in a mold plate. Thus, for many of the same reasons provided above for Inoue '237, Applicants request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections based on Puniello '881.

CONCLUSION

All claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that the present amendments and remarks still do not resolve all of the issues regarding patentability of the pending claims, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned attorneys to discuss any remaining issues.

A Petition for a 2-month extension of time is submitted herewith, including authorization to charge the appropriate fee. No fee is believed due for adding claims 37-42 since claims 1-30 have been withdrawn. No other fee is believed to be due at this time. Should any fee be required, however, please charge such fee to Swidler Berlin Shreff Friedman, LLP Deposit Account No. 195127, Order No. 20002.0015.

Respectfully submitted,
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By: 

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